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AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
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TO: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – STREET
ACADEMY, INC., STREET ACADEMY GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Street Academy Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by the Street Academy Group Homes, Inc. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Street Academy Group Home is a six-bed facility, which provides care for girls ages 9-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, the Group Home was providing services to three DCFS children. Street Academy Group Home is located in the Second District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review was to determine whether the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues, and included an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and an interview with one child placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. The interview with the resident was designed to obtain her perspective on the program services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Summary of Findings

The Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement.

Attached is a detailed report of the review findings.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:mn

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Paul Higa, Chief Probation Officer
Barbara Okonkwo, Executive Director, Street Academy Group Homes
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
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**Street Academy
2120 Redondo Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90016
Phone: (323) 936-2120
License No.: 197600088
Rate Classification Level: 9**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Sample size for resident interviews: one

Comments:

Street Academy Group Home is a mid-sized facility located in a residential community. The Group Home is clean, spacious, and comfortable. It is well maintained, nicely landscaped, and blends well with the other homes on the block. There were no observable safety hazards.

The interior of the Group Home is generally neat and clean. The décor provides a home-like atmosphere. The common rooms are nicely decorated and maintained. The resident bedrooms are spacious, comfortable, and personalized to each child's desire with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a VCR/DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

There is a sufficient supply of frozen food, meat, canned goods, bakery items, and fresh fruit. The food is accessible and appropriately dated.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interview

Sample size for resident interviews: One

Comments:

The resident met the Agency's population criteria as outlined in the Program Statement. The resident received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the Agency's program.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, realistic, measurable, and time specific. There was documentation to support the placement worker's participation in the development and update of the NSPs.

The resident's quarterly reports are current, comprehensive, and appropriately focus on the goals of the NSPs.

The resident is provided with psychological testing, and emotional and developmental counseling as required by the Program Statement. Case files reflect adequate documentation to show evidence of the resident receiving regular individual and/or group therapy.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interview****Sample size for resident interviews: One****Comments:**

The resident attends school. Her records contain current semester report cards and/or progress reports. She receives assistance with her homework as needed.

The Agency's program includes the development of the resident's daily living skills. The resident is involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals. Hygiene care is discussed as needed and employment preparation encouraged.

The resident is offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

The resident has the opportunity to work and manage her own money.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interview

Sample size for resident interviews: One

Comments:

The Agency provides its residents opportunities to participate in recreational activities.

The resident expressed satisfaction with the recreational activities and stated that the recreation schedules are followed.

The Group Home utilizes local community organizations for recreational and program resources. The resident reported that she participates in planning some of the activities. The resident has free time and is able to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation is provided to and from activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

According to the Agency's management, there are no residents receiving psychotropic medications. This information is appropriately documented.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: One

Comments:

The resident expressed satisfaction with the Agency and its staff. The resident participated in an initial orientation, and the Group Home's policies and procedures are posted. The resident reported that she feels safe in the Group Home and that there is no interference with her daily living functions.

The resident reported satisfaction with the taste of the food and with her ability to participate in menu development. She reported that there is sufficient staff supervision and expressed satisfaction with the quality of her interactions with the staff.

The resident reported that she is assigned chores to complete on a daily basis that are reasonable and not too demanding. The resident is able to have visitors and make and receive personal telephone calls. She is permitted to contact her social worker, attorney, and family members as needed. The resident is able to attend weekly religious services of her choice and feels that the Agency is respectful of her cultural lifestyle. The Agency allows the resident to celebrate holidays.

The resident reported that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

The resident is aware of her right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interview****Sample size for resident interviews: One****Comments:**

The Agency provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the resident. The Group Home supplies the resident with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance and the resident is given the opportunity to select her own clothes. Clothing provided to the resident is of good quality and sufficient quantity.

The Agency provides the resident with the required minimum weekly allowance, which she is able to increase according to the Agency's behavioral system. The resident is permitted to spend her allowance as she chooses.

The Agency provides the resident with adequate personal care items and adequate storage.

The resident is provided with regular opportunities to maintain a photo album/life book.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.